



# U.S. COAST GUARD



## Homeland Security

### Flag Voice 201

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### GROWING THE CIVILIAN WORKFORCE

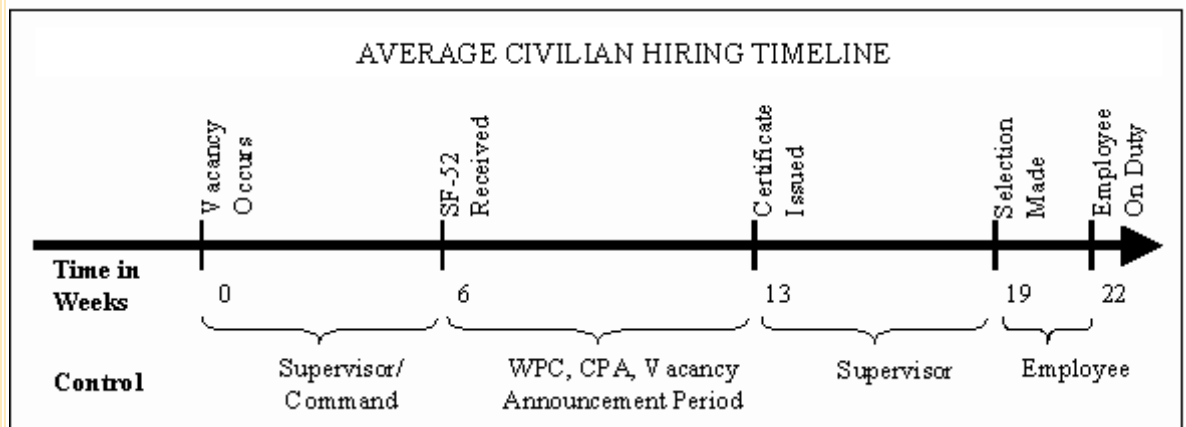
We have been experiencing a relatively steady civilian workforce population growth rate for the past 5 years. Although we have been growing our civilian workforce at a healthy clip, we haven't kept up with the growth rate of the civilian personnel allowance list (PAL). In FY03, our permanent civilian workforce grew by 2.8% and our total civilian workforce (perm + temp) grew by 4.9%. However, the civilian PAL grew by 6.8%. Of the 7,261 positions authorized at the end of FY-03, 696 are vacant.

In FY-03, our goal was to hire 715 new permanent employees. We actually achieved 673 new permanent hires. However, this doesn't reflect the true dynamics within our civilian workforce. We actually completed 1,984 job-fill actions, comprised of the 673 new permanent hires, 540 internal hires within our civilian workforce itself, and 771 temp + term hires. This represents a churn rate of about 27% of the authorized PAL positions, not really much different than what we experience in the military workforce on an annual basis. Our goal for FY-04 is to hire 825 new permanent employees.

A fully staffed civilian workforce is essential to our daily operations and readiness. In addition, filling the PAL has important long-term budget implications. We can't justify increasing the budget to get more civilian positions if we don't fill what we are currently authorized. Our civilian workforce is currently funded at about 91% of our PAL positions. However, the Chief of Staff has recently approved a 5-year plan to increase funding to about 97% of our PAL positions by FY-08, but we need everyone's help to achieve this goal. Our goal for FY-04 is to improve our PAL position fill rate to about 92.5%, again with the challenge of overcoming significant PAL growth.

The hiring process can't begin until a request to fill (SF-52) has been received. In FY-03, the Office of Civilian Personnel (G-WPC) received about 120 fill requests per month from managers and supervisors Coast Guard-wide which resulted in the 673 new permanent hires. In FY-04, G-WPC will need to receive nearly 150 fill requests per month to achieve our goal of 825 new permanent hires. G-WPC has implemented several improvements to speed the filling of jobs. These improvements include implementing an automated classification and staffing system (AVUE); establishing the first dedicated civilian recruiting team; obtaining direct examining authority from OPM; and contracting support to reduce workload backlog. These improvements have reduced some of the backlog, enabled lists of job applicants to get to supervisors faster, and improved the quantity and quality of candidates. G-WPC continues to look for ways to improve the hiring process. Nonetheless, the length of time to fill a position remains a significant challenge.

We've examined and tracked the civilian hiring timeline in great detail to gain insight into the process. Our examination indicates it takes on average 4 to 5 months (up to 22 weeks) to bring an employee on board. Much of this time lag is outside G-WPC's control. Statistics show that supervisors are waiting on average 6 weeks after a vacancy occurs before the Command Staff Advisor (CSA)/HR specialist is notified to begin the hiring process. Supervisors are also taking on average 6 weeks to make a selection after receiving a certificate of job applicants. The following timeline depicts the average time it takes to fill a civilian position:



I know it takes some time to accomplish each phase of the hiring process. However, if we can reduce the amount of time it takes to generate a fill request, we can make some measureable progress in improving our hiring efficiency. I ask your help in getting prompt action to generate timely fill requests.

Filling the civilian workforce is a Coast Guard-wide responsibility. Let's get the message out to reduce any undue lag time. Help us help you obtain full utilization of the civilian workforce.

Regards,

*RADM Kenneth T. Venuto*  
 Ken Venuto

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